

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 00090 060630Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 /018 W
-----060631Z 088060 /15
R 051140Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO USDOC WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 0710

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, IR
SUBJ: PRODUCT OPPORTUNITY: SALE OF VEHICLES TO GOI

REF: 76 USDOC 17192 (NOTAL)

1. JAFAR AKHAVAN, PRESIDENT OF SHERKATE SAHAMI, JEEP, AND L.H. WILKING, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF GENERAL MOTORS IRAN (IN WHICH AKHAVAN IS A PARTNER), ARE SCHEDULED TO LEAVE FOR THE U.S. ON JANUARY 13. ON THE ONE HAND, THEY WILL BE DISCUSSING THE EXPANSION OF THE GENERAL MOTORS' PRODUCTION LINE IN TEHRAN TO INCLUDE CHEVROLETS, APOLLOS, SEVILLES AND LIGHT TRUCKS; ON THE OTHER, AKHAVAN WILL BE MEETING WITH OFFICIALS OF AMERICAN MOTORS GENERAL CORPORATION TO DISCUSS THE PROSPECTS FOR INCREASED OUTPUT OF CIVILIAN JEEPS AND THE PRODUCTION OF MILITARY JEEPS.

2. AKHAVAN APPARENTLY IS FIGHTING A NEAR-GROUND BATTLE AGAINST GENERAL TOUFANIAN AND THE MILITARY INDUSTRIES ORGANIZATION, WHO REPORTEDLY HAVE DECIDED IN FAVOR OF A MERCEDES BENZ PLANT TO BE LOCATED IN TABRIZ FOR THE PRODUCTION OF 30 THOUSAND MILITARY AND 20 THOUSAND CIVILIAN JEEPS ANNUALLY. (AKHAVAN INDICATED THAT PRE-SENT JEEP RPRODUCTION (CIVILIAN-TYPE ONLY) AT SHERKATE SAHAMI JEEP IS ABOUT 12 THOUSAND.) TOUFANIAN REPORTEDLY
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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 00090 060630Z

HAD OBTAINED AGREEMENT FROM THE SHAH FOR MERCEDES BENZ AFTER HAVING ARRANGED FOR MERCEDES BENZ TO FLY IN SEVERAL MODELS FOR DEMONSTRATION.

3. ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE, AKHAVAN WENT TO JAFAR SHARIF-EMAMI TO REQUEST FURTHER CONSIDERATION FOR THE U.S. VEHICLES AND THE LATTER THEN PREVAILED UPON THE SHAH

TO KEEP THE MATTER OPEN FOR A TIME. AKHAVAN HAS TELEXED AMERICAN MOTORS GENERAL ASKING THAT THEY PREPARE A PROGRAM FOR ANNUAL PRODUCTION OF THE 30 THOUSAND AND 20 THOUSAND VEHICLES. HE HAS NOT YET HAD A RESPONSE.

4. IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT LAST OCTOBER, AMERICAN MOTORS GENERAL VICE PRESIDENT JAMES H. (TRAPPER) DRUM VISITED IRAN ON THE PROJECT AND MET WITH AMBASSADOR HELMS AND OTHER EMBASSY OFFICERS AND WITH A NUMBER OF IRANIAN OFFICIALS. EMBASSY HAS HEARD NOTHING FROM DRUM SINCE THAT TIME; HOWEVER, IT IS BELIEVED THAT HE IS BEING KEPT INFORMED OF THE CURRENT SITUATION BY AKHAVAN. ALTHOUGH PURPOSE OF THIS MESSAGE IS TO KEEP STATE AND USDOC INFORMED OF PROJECT STATUS, USDOC MAY WISH TO PASS SUBSTANCE TO DRUM.

5. SUBSEQUENT TO ABOVE, SAHAMI JEEP INFORMED EMBOFF THAT AMERICAN MOTORS GENERAL HAS REPLIED TO AKHAVAN'S TELEXES AND INDICATED IT WAS SENDING AMERICAN MOTORS ENGINEER TO TEHRAN JANUARY 15-20 TO LOOK INTO SITUATION. ACCORDINGLY AKHAVAN AND WILKING POSTPONING DEPARTURE FOR US UNTIL JANUARY 19 OR 20. AKHAVAN HAS ALSO REQUESTED EMBASSY SUPPORT FOR PROJECT.

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 05-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
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